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173 segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The
613 constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor
631 segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[12] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

173 We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a
613 segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his
622 dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord
631 except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards
[608] his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual,
[582] for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[12] *Cigaŵa*, pl. *vigaŵa*, from *ku-gaŵa*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-gaŵa*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

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before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment.

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants.

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears.

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments

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631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[21] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[648] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
631 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
634 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
648 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in
178 the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neigh-
[582] bours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[21] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

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and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the

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closeness of the ties linking them to the areas in which they find themselves. To give two extreme examples, an agricultural demonstrator, after a few months in a rural compound, sought to marry a daughter of a near-by village headman. A policeman, sent to a village to investigate a murder, married a woman related to the dead man. Marriages of this kind are made partly because there is no other way by which a stranger in a village can be certain of getting enough to eat, but they also serve to broaden and diversify the relationship between the stranger and the people among whom he finds himself. Some of these marriages are terminated when the stranger is moved to another district, but there are a number of instances where Ngoni wives have gone with their stranger husbands to distant mines and towns. This process is, of course, merely part of the much wider one by which many Ngoni women follow their husbands when they leave their villages to seek work in Southern Rhodesia.

Similarly, chiefs and other important rural leaders endeavour to establish enduring relations with members of the African Civil Service. Some civil servants are their kinsmen, for one way by which a junior son of an important man can gain the position he desires but which is denied him by the rule of primogeniture is to enter the Civil Service or to seek advancement in one of the churches. Others are related by affinity, while yet others may go out of the way to offer hospitality to visiting political leaders when they need food and shelter in town. Some Ngoni civil servants maintain large households in the villages, which they visit at week-ends, and which they hope will have grown into recognized villages by the time they come to retire.

Thus there are two distinct groups of Africans concerned with public affairs, the African Civil Service and the Native Authority bureaucracy. They are in intimate association with one another, and both exercise considerable political power. Both are formally distinct from the old political system. But status in traditional terms, as chief or village headman or head of a division or cluster, is still recognized in the face-to-face relations of people generally, and hence there is a continual attempt to bring the two systems into congruence with one another. Clerks aspire to become headmen when they retire, while headmen aspire to be the fathers and fathers-in-law of clerks. This is no new development, for as early as 1907 Stigand reported that a Swahili, whose home was near Zanzibar, and who had been a soldier, had founded a small village close to Fort Manning.[2]

[2] Stigand, 'Natives of Nyasaland', p. 125. See p. 118.

G43 G44 762 766 came, 'to quieten them'. Thereafter this Nguno boy did everything with the Paramount. He began by washing with the royal medicine at the time of the accession. He drank beer with him, he ate with him, he 'stood with him' (*amaima naye*) on all important occasions, such as sending out the army and judging cases. He slept in his own hut which was in the *cigudlo*, where the Paramount's sons built, and when he married he built huts for his wives in that same section of the royal village. At the death of the Paramount, he lianced the war-dance in full war-dress and leaped on to the pyre to perish with the dead Paramount in the flames.

Informants sometimes said of this Nguno boy that he was 'of one blood' with the Maseko clan. They described the relationship between the two clans as that of *ubale*, brotherhood, which excluded all possibility of inter-marriage. Between the Paramount and the Nguno boy was established a joking relationship, so that the Nguno boy could say 'good and bad things to the Paramount'.

[582] [602]

G43 G44 It was clear that the ritual and social aspects of this relationship complemented and supported each other. The recurrent emphasis on the taking of medicine at the accession, on the participation in the war medicines, and most of all on the death on the Paramount's funeral pyre, were all evidence of this ritual relationship. Informants repudiated any idea of a scapegoat which involved protecting the Paramount from poison by eating before him. They reiterated several times that the Nguno boy did not eat *before* the Paramount; in fact he ate after him though sharing his food dishes. Surrounding the Paramount were other boys called *mizotho*, who performed the duties of pages or personal servants. The Nguno boy was always distinct from them, and the distinction lay in the combined ritual and social relationship.

The concept of a 'shadow' was of something very close to a person, almost indistinguishable from the person himself. In referring to the Nguno boy in the terms 'he was as the shadow of the *inkosi*, he was as himself' informants emphasized the extreme closeness of the tie between the two men. It seemed as if the royal shadow existed to meet a need for strengthening the Paramount by giving him a second self. It emphasized also the dangerous sphere of life and action in which the Paramount lived, due to the medicines he had used, his powers to protect the land and its fertility, and his power to give strength to the army through the use of the *inuga* medicine. No one else in the royal family shared these dangers and there was inherent in the relationship of royal shadow to *inkosi* the sense of some security through a companionship where protective medicines were shared as well as the hazardous occasions for which they gave protection.

G43 G44 G04 This intense and dangerous ritual relationship was buttressed by the social ties binding the Nguno boy to the Paramount. We have seen that between them as individuals there was that freedom of a joking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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mahumazana was not invariable. Some informants said that *ahumazana* were appointed by the Paramount. Others said that if the ancestor of a Swazi clan was known *by* name to have crossed the Zambesi with Zwangendaba or Mputa then his descendant in the direct line was always a *mahumazana*.

It was the criterion of having a known ancestor and knowing the genealogy of the clan that was most widely accepted in acknowledging the head of a Swazi clan as *mahumazana*. At the clan head village prayers were addressed to this ancestor, his cattle were sacrificed, and the names recited as far back as tradition and memory could recall. Later we shall see that there were said to be about 25 Swazi clans in the northern kingdom and 29 in the central. Among these about 15 in the northern and 12 in the central kingdom had head villages where the ancestor cult was performed. In the central kingdom several of the leading clans had their head villages in Portuguese territory, and therefore did not carry out the cult in the central kingdom.

In the hierarchy of the clans the Swazi clans were the acknowledged leaders. In village and national life this leadership was accorded to the royal clans and the clans of the chiefs, and was the reason for the respect shown to *ahumazana* who had no direct political power. Only the heads of Swazi clans possessed *izitukazo* (honorific epithets) which commemorated events in the past history of the clan leaders. On all ceremonial occasions heads of Swazi clans, whether in national or in village affairs, took precedence over the rest when walking in procession, standing for dances, taking part in ritual, or sitting down at feasts. Certain forms of burial, such as the use of a sheep-skin, and placing the corpse on a shelf in the grave, were observed only for members of the Swazi clans.

In arranging marriages, there was, in addition to strict exogamy within a clan, a prohibition on marriage between clans which had *zibale* (brotherhood) relations. In the central kingdom the royal clan, Maseko, had *zibale* with the Nguso clan which provided the royal shadow, and with the Nzunga clan. The Nzunga and the Maseko clans shared the same taboos, notably elephant and fish. As well as prohibited marriages between certain clans, there were preferred marriages between certain others. In general there was a preference for marriage between the families of leading Swazi clans. In the northern kingdom the Nqumayo clan had a preference for marrying into the Thole, Nhlane, Maluleka and Pakati clans. It was alleged that formerly they could marry only into these clans, but in the 1930's exceptions were found in a number of villages.

The following lists of the names of Swazi clans were collected from informants in the two kingdoms, who were questioned closely about which names should be included under the title of Swazi. This was the grouping claimed by the Ngoni in both kingdoms. They said emphatic-

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *makosana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere.

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambesi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom.

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *ukhonzi*, a substitute or additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give another daughter as *ukhonzi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *ukhonzi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *ukhonzi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the headmen played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner. In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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In all the diagrams ego is shown as male. There is no difference in the way these terms are used when ego is a woman, except that she calls her spouse *husband* and not *wife*. There is no consensus as to what great-grandparents should be called. Sometimes *father* 601 [183]

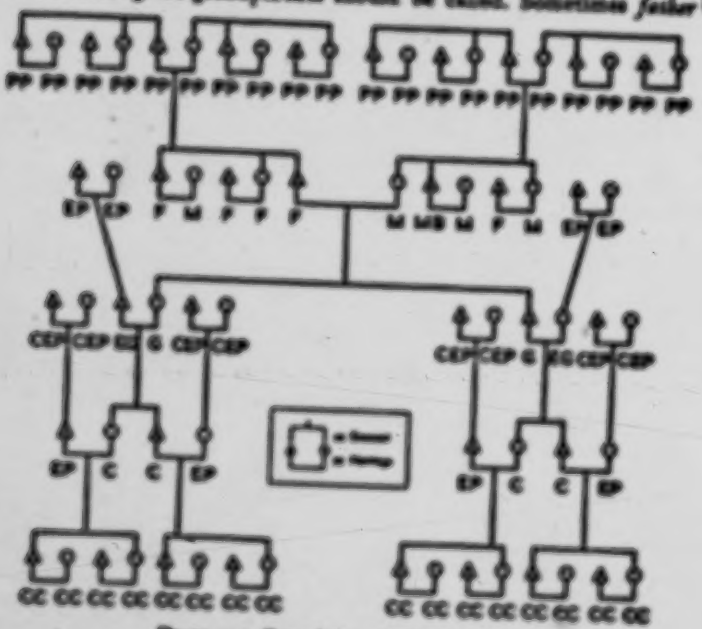
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Diagram 3. Extended use of kinship terms

or *mother* is used, according to sex, while others use *grandparent*. Similarly, great-grandchildren are sometimes called *child*, sometimes *grandchild*.

Exogamy and Descent-names

A man may not marry anyone whom he calls *mother*, *father*, *mother's* 582 ●
brother, *child*, *sister*, *child's parent-in-law*, and, except for his 935
cross-cousins, *sibling*. Marriage with his brother's wife's sister, whom 601
he calls *sibling-in-law*, is allowed, but is thought to be not very satisfactory. As we have seen, these terms can be applied widely, with no theoretical limit to the extent of application. Little interest is shown, however, in tracing genealogical relationships accurately, and the sex and age of the relative referred to may affect the term used. If a

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only because they had been conquered, but because they disliked and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were reinforced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village, or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group, many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

Life in two Ngoni villages

I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages, in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the head-ring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any prohibition on marriage until a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Eshowe of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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returning from work in the south about every two years or so, even if it was only for temporary residence in the village, anticipated, though only to some extent, the social disintegration and upheaval caused by the absence of so many young men.

In pre-European days, girls waited to marry for five to ten years after attaining puberty. For high-born Ngoni girls a further 'pre-marriage' ceremony and ritual took place immediately before marriage. This was after the girl and young man accepted by her as a 'lover' had been courting for some time but before any formal betrothal took place which involved the approach of the two families through intermediaries, and the discussions about the transfer of cattle. The Ngoni said that this pre-marriage rite was the equivalent for the girls of taking the head-ring for the men, because when it was held it was a public declaration that marriage was now possible for the girl, and she was acknowledged as having reached adult, that is married women's, status.

This ceremony began by the senior women of the girl's home sending for her father and saying to him: 'This child is now grown up. She is ready to be prepared to enter the state of adulthood.' One of the Ngoni names for the ceremony means—'staying in the hut as if fasting'—a ritual practice associated with rain-making by the Paramount, and with taking 'medicines' for strengthening a new Paramount or chief on his accession. The girl, with her companion, spent two or three days in a hut, hidden behind upright mats curved so that no one could see round them. They were naked except for a long soft leather cloak worn over one shoulder and tied under the right arm. During this seclusion they had food brought to them by the senior women of the girl's house. While the girls were hidden away the village women cooked quantities of meat and brewed beer to entertain friends and relatives of the girl's father. During the feasting and drinking the senior women, with the men, danced the special dances and sang the songs associated with this ritual. Some of

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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to establish their hold. The Ngoni elders said the missions did not like it, and alleged that they gave it up for this reason. But they held on to other rituals also not approved by the missions, and it was probably largely due to the fact that there were no longer large herds of cattle to provide lavish feasts. The songs were remembered and sung by the older women when dancing the special dances associated with the ritual, holding in their hands short rods and small rounded shields, and making stiff jerking movements of head and elbows. Such dances as were put on for me were however a relic and not a living tradition. For the Ngoni girl of good family there was no longer any intervening ritual between her private puberty ceremony and the marriage ceremony.

The marriage age of girls, like that of men, was much earlier than formerly, the most usual age being from sixteen upwards. Most of the older women held that this left very little time in which to teach girls all that they were expected to know before being married and leaving their own home and their father's village for good. This was a particular cause of anxiety to the senior women in areas where the young men emigrated soon after marriage, and where the girl had to maintain her own position and reputation among his relatives without his companionship and support.

Young adults in Ngoni society

We have just seen that cultural changes coming from the outside radically altered the traditional pattern of development of Ngoni youths and girls. The net result of these changes was to telescope the period between physical maturity at puberty and full adult status at marriage, to squeeze the former eight to ten years of this intervening period into about two for the girls and four at most for the youths. This shortened period of preparation for full adult life raised a number of problems for the Ngoni elders. They were aware, as was suggested in the beginning of this chapter, that the attainment of physical maturity called for some re-alignment

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of the emphases in training boys and girls. This was especially the case in the regulation of relations between the sexes, but new emphases were also needed in the knowledge and competence of young adults before setting up their own households. Boys and girls from this stage onwards were in fact in Ngoni culture thought of as young adults. They had passed out of childhood through the physical change at puberty, and though for a year or two that made little difference in their way of living, they were now regarded as in training for what lay ahead of them. For that training the senior members of their father's family still felt responsible and exercised control. But the emphasis in the training given was on what adults should know, how adults should behave, what adults should be able to do. For the rest of this chapter we shall follow up the new emphases in guiding and to some extent controlling relations between the sexes, and in the following chapter the emphases on cultural knowledge and on technical skills.

In the all-important sphere of heterosexual relations, there were certain social controls among the Ngoni which operated in the selection of a mate and in the form of courtship leading to marriage. Prohibited sex relations and prohibited marriages set up a pattern of avoidance between brothers and sisters, between parallel cousins, and between members of the same clan, and in former days the prohibition had extended also to the children of men of the same regiment. In selecting a mate the Ngoni preference was for someone in another village, for someone of an equal ranking or higher clan, and among Christian families for a young man or girl either already baptised or under instruction. This last preference, urged strongly by the missions and by Christian parents, was often difficult to reconcile with the preference for a high-ranking clan connexion. This was illustrated in the case of a young teacher, whose parents were Christians. He found himself being given contrary advice about choosing a wife. His father died, and his grandfather, an ex-

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

The missionaries, and through their influence Ngoni Christian teachers and ministers, tried to put a stop to this form of courtship. It was very difficult to convince Ngoni elders and young people that a practice which had been considered socially correct and was under some measure of social control, was now wrong and must be given up. They saw it as something quite distinct from casual and promiscuous intercourse, which they discouraged and despised. A young Christian teacher, speaking of his own youth, said: 'The Christian rule forbade boys and girls to sleep together at night and to play as our fathers played. We did not keep those rules, and we visited girls at night who wanted us, but we were careful not to harm them.' The Ngoni Christian leaders who were aware of the problems on both sides finally threw their weight into advocating much earlier marriages while supporting the carrying out of the private puberty rituals. As we have seen, marriage became usual at about sixteen for girls and from eighteen upwards for youths. This as a rule, though not invariably, ensured that the girls were virgin at marriage which was a very strict Ngoni requirement. But it brought in its train a number of other difficulties which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

APPENDIX

HOUSE, HUT, HOUSEHOLD, house is used in this book for the Ngoni system of grouping round the leading women who were wives or mothers of the head of the village. Hut is used for the actual building. Household is used for a group of huts within a compound. (See diagrams in Chapter IV. See also Ngoni of Nyasaland page 122). 129 562 592

PATRILOCAL), refers to residence of young couple after marriage 591

MATRILOCAL), —sometimes called virilocal and uxorilocal.

CLASSIFICATORY KINSHIP TERMS, extension of use of father, mother, brother, sister etc. to wide range of relatives. 601

PARALLEL COUSINS, children of father's brothers or mother's sisters—regarded as brothers and sisters and called such.

CROSS COUSINS, children of father's sisters or mother's brothers—with whom marriage was possible. [582]

AGE-SETS, the special Ngoni terms are given in 'Ngoni of Nyasaland' page 144. 561

all children: *abantwana* 104

young men: *amajita*

young girls before puberty: *intakazana*

young girls after puberty: *isitsimiki*

III

VERNACULAR TERMS 104

AMBUYE	the important people
ANAKE	[illegible]
BABO	grandparent or any very senior person
BUKOSWA	respect
BWALAWEMBUZI	chief hut in a village
BWANYA	official in village
CHIMANDAMI	girl attendants
LAWENI	boys' dormitory
MWENI	owner—of a hut, cattle, dance group

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed here never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedition . . . p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 130.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 111.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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segment of the residential system was recognized and institutionalized. Furthermore, it is in line with this thesis that, in arranging the marriage of recent captives, no great attention was paid to the establishment of farflung affinal links. Frequently a man and a woman who had been allocated to the same captor, and whom they both addressed as 'father', married one another on his instructions. Payments made in these marriages were small or non-existent. Recent captives were too low in the hierarchical structure to be concerned about reinforcing their position by horizontal ties. Their ambitions were directed to securing promotion by becoming lieutenants of their captors.

5. Autonomy of marriage

The pattern of segmentation of the residential system was continually changing. In part this was due to proliferation downwards, that is, by the process of increasing segmentation between brothers and between fathers' sons. In addition to this process political promotion and death in war altered the relative position of the segments associated with particular people. Marriage itself was a social process which, in so far as the relationship between man and wife was concerned, did not react directly on the residential system. This system was based on patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence and the movements of women, except at the level of the queens, were from one point of view irrelevant to the system. It was the grouping of children round their mother, in contrast to their father's children by other wives, which related the marriages of one generation to the patterns of segmentation of the next. A woman with no children in her house, whether her status was high or low, was structurally irrelevant to the residential system.

Marriage was also largely independent of the central government. Warfare, not domesticity, was the right and proper occupation of young men, and the age at which men married for the first time was probably about thirty. Informants all stressed that in the old days first marriage took place at later ages for both men and women than it does now. Wiese implies that girls were married any time after puberty,[**] but my informants stated that girls did not usually marry until they were aged about twenty to twenty-five. Men and women were organized into parallel age-sets, usually referred to as regiments, and corresponding regiments used to dance and frolic together. Sometimes a man took a wife from the regiment corresponding to his own, but there does not seem to have been any positive obligation to do so. Particular regiments were not prevented from marrying, as among the Zulu, and all the tales of the Paramount Chief intervening in the affairs of warriors are phrased in terms of the chief instructing a laggard to find himself a wife when all his age mates had already married. The chief did however interfere

[**] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expedition . . .', p. 473, and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

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855 593 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband, wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

631 554 591 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw attention to two features of the residential system which were not, at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features [178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 613 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the [583] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this. [178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

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581 on the one hand, acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

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586
589
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Age in years	Marital Status								
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Number of wives							
		0		1	2	3	Not known	Total wedded men	Total
		Divorced men	Widowers						
0-4	31	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	31
5-9	41	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	41
10-14	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
15-19	28	1	–	2	–	–	–	3	31
20-24	14	–	–	6	–	–	–	6	20
25-29	–	2	–	13	–	–	1	16	16
30-34	–	1	–	7	–	–	–	8	8
35-39	–	–	–	13	3	1	–	17	17
40-44	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	8	8
45-49	–	–	–	8	–	–	1	9	9
50-54	–	1	–	4	–	–	1	6	6
55-59	–	–	–	8	1	–	1	10	10
60-64	–	–	–	9	2	–	–	11	11
65-69	–	1	1	6	1	1	–	10	10
70-74	–	1	1	1	1	–	–	3	3
75-79	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	2	2
Not known	–	–	–	1	–	–	6	7	7
Total	209	7	1	83	11	4	10	116	325

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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cousins. Whether a man decides to marry a cross-cousin or an unrelated woman, he still has to decide just exactly whom he will try to marry, and similarly a woman has also to make up her own mind about whom she will accept as husband. The initiative in choosing lies very largely with the couple themselves, and not with their parents and kinsmen. If a man is diffident about asking a woman to marry him, he may ask his father or elder brother to seek out a woman for him, or a woman may have a spouse presented to

Table IV. Marital status of females, by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital status								Total
	Unwedded	Wedded							
		Divorced women living alone	Widows living alone	Divorced women living in [illegible]	Married women			Total wedded women	
					H3H	HA	H3		
0-4	88	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	88
5-9	82	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	82
10-14	84	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	84
15-19	30	–	1	–	14	9	1	24	45
20-24	–	3	–	–	10	11	–	24	24
25-29	–	1	–	1	17	6	1	25	25
30-34	1	–	–	–	14	8	–	22	23
35-39	–	–	–	–	19	3	1	23	23
40-44	–	3	1	–	13	1	1	16	16
45-49	–	–	2	–	15	2	–	17	17
50-54	–	3	–	–	7	3	1	14	14
55-59	–	1	8	–	6	–	1	15	15
60-64	–	1	6	–	3	1	1	12	12
65-69	–	3	8	–	1	–	–	11	11
70-74	–	–	6	–	1	–	–	6	6
75-79	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
80-84	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Not known	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	4	4
Total	289	14	31	1	133	46	7	220	421

Legend

H3H (Husband at Home)	Husband living within thirty miles of his wife, in a village, and not separated from her
HA (Husband Away)	Husband living permanently on a farm, or in Fort Jameson, or more than thirty miles away
H3 (Husband Separated)	Husband living within thirty miles, in a village, but separated from his wife

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Maravi FR4
Wisa FR5

her by her parents, but the general rule is that people seek their own partners. Certain rules have to be considered by whoever is trying to arrange the match. These determine which marriages are regarded as incestuous, and which marriages are preferred. The kinship relationship, age, ethnic group, and religion of the partner all have to be considered. With the passing of the regimental system, considerations of State no longer affect choice of marriage partner, except for near relatives of the chiefs.

A man may not marry anyone whom he addresses with a kinship term belonging to the first ascending or the first descending generation. This prohibits marriage between ego and his *mothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, affines,* and *children.*[1] In his own generation he cannot marry his *child's parents-in-law* and he cannot marry any *sibling* who is not a *cross-cousin.* In the second ascending and descending generation a man may address his female *grandparent* and his female *grandchild* as *wife,* and he can, to a slight extent, joke and refer in general terms to sexual activities in their presence. But Nguni regard it as a typical Cewa custom for a man actually to marry his female *grandchild,* and do not approve of such marriages among their own people. A man may fondle the breasts of his grandmother and suggest in the company of others at a beer drink that his granddaughter should marry him, but that is as far as this joking goes.

A man is entitled, and to some extent expected, to flirt with his female *cross-cousins.* We have noted above that the Nguni peoples from whom the leaders of the Ngoni kingdom were drawn did not allow cross-cousin marriage. By contrast the Cewa and Wisa peoples, who were captured in large numbers from about 1870 on, came from societies in which local organization was based on bilateral intra-village cross-cousin marriage. In villages where there are now many people claiming Cewa and Wisa descent there are many instances of cross-cousin marriage. This form of marriage is by no means confined to people of low ethnic status, and even the Paramount Chief has married classificatory cross-cousins. In the aristocratic families it is sometimes suggested that an important man might marry a cross-cousin while still young and unable to muster a large marriage payment and then later marry an unrelated woman as his great wife. No distinction is made between marriage with father's sister's daughter and with mother's brother's daughter. The somewhat equivocal attitude towards cross-cousin marriage is seen in the conflicting statements of informants about payments in cross-cousin marriages. Some say that no payments ought to be made, for are they not all one family (*banja*). If payments were made it would mean that the family had split. Others say that payments can and ought to be made and that provided the cross-

[1] For the definition of these terms, see Barnes, *op. cit.* pp. 222 ff.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Malawi FR4

cousin comes from another village she can become the great wife. This lack of consensus about the appropriateness of payments may be due to the difference between the traditional views of the Nguni aristocrats and of their more recent captives. The Nguni tribes, although not allowing cross-cousin marriage, did require transfers of marriage cattle. In contrast to them, the Cewa and others who approved of cross-cousin marriages did not make large marriage payments. It may be that neither view has prevailed over the other among the present-day Ngoni.

When I began my inquiries into marriage I hoped to express numerically the frequencies with which people married their cross-cousins and other relatives. As my inquiries proceeded, it became clear that this was not the simple matter I had thought it to be. There was little consistency in the way in which the word *mzyala*, which I have translated as cross-cousin, was used by different informants. Sometimes one spouse would say that the other was a cross-cousin and the other would deny it. In addition to the expected use of the term to refer to father's own or classificatory sister's child, and to mother's own or classificatory brother's child, it was also used for 'person with a parent with the same descent-name as mine', 'person from the same tribe', 'person with the same captor', and so on. Some informants regarded the alleged cross-cousin relationship as a primary one that could not necessarily be broken down into a series of links between parents and children and between siblings. If pressed, informants would often say in explanation 'One of us came from the side of the man and the other from the side of the woman'; yet they would be unable to decide who came from the man's side and who from the woman's. This complexity of reference of the term for cross-cousin applies to a lesser extent to the terms for other relatives with whom marriage takes place. In view of the lack of consensus and of the large number of possible referents of single vernacular terms, I have thought it best to postpone publication of any frequencies until later, when I hope to deal with the general problem of inter-connectedness between local groups of kin.

We have mentioned above the prohibitions against marrying certain relatives and the partial encouragement to marry a cross-cousin. In addition, a man should not marry his brother's wife's sister, and some people say that a man ought not to marry his sister's husband's sister. Both these women he calls *sibling-in-law*. These are not exactly definite prohibitions, but rather pieces of traditional advice. Marriage with these relatives does occur. No specific reason was given for this prohibition, but I noticed that a quarrel in one marriage tended to have repercussions in the marriages of the spouses' siblings, and the objection to these types of marriage may be based on some consideration of this kind.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Marqvi FR4

Case history 1

Amos[1] was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kindolk.

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognise these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

[1] All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended.[1] Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,[2] but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Nsenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

[1] Cf. Barnes, *op. cit.* pp. 214 ff.

the husband and wife are secluded in their hut for two nights and a day; if obliged to leave, they must avoid being seen. On the second day, still keeping out of sight, they go all to the bush at dawn and remain there till dusk. The following day they do the same; but in the evening the girl's mother takes them with some fresh food to the husband; they make obeisance to him, and receive a present of cloth. Next morning they show themselves in the village and display their banality. Whenever the girl meets another adult woman, she prostrates herself, biting her face in her hands; the other woman whispers in her ear, and she stands up again. The ephemeris are similarly constituted before women older than themselves. Every time the girl meets given her a small present, such as a penny or a little maize; in acknowledgment she may not speak, but shape her hands, and let also shape him. Neither husband nor wife may speak to anyone on that day, but on the fifth morning they resume a normal existence.

The Ekwee girls are usually married a few months before puberty. The *Angwi* in the olden days were not wed till several years later; but now they generally marry shortly after puberty, and in some cases they have begun to follow the custom of the Ashere.

If a Ekwee girl is not married when she first menstruates, a temporary substitute must be found. On the fourth day, after the forbidden sexuality has been procured, her father asks her which maternal uncle to find a *fini*. This man is generally a friend decided upon beforehand by the parents, and is usually middle-aged; or, if he were a youth, the girl might want to marry him, contrary to custom. He receives a beef from the uncle, and visits the girl by stealth that night and the next two; no one must be allowed to discover his identity, and after the second night he must not come near her again. If the girl does not like the look of the *fini* on either occasion, and refuses to have anything to do with him, he goes away and complains to the uncle, from whom he receives a beef as compensation for the insult. The uncle reports the objection to the ephemeris' men, and reports it to the mother next morning. The mother then interviews the girl, who names a man she is willing to accept as a *fini*, and he is called on the following evening; but in the interval and until she has received the *fini*, the ephemeris leave her, and she must remain by herself, so that all the people know she has refused her *fini*.

If she is still unmarried at the later ceremony, she is known as a *kalgali*, and may not be danced alone, but only in the company of one or more married girls. A second *fini* must be chosen in the same way to sleep with her on the two nights following the close of the ceremony; but he observes the same secrecy, and plays no part below by the husband in public.

[1] Cf. also Meinertz, *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1914, vol. xl, p. 214. 'When a Kyanja widow has been shaved in the course of the funeral ceremonial rites, the following night' she has to sleep with a man paid by her relatives. He is called *Fini*, because he stands for relatives.'

This same custom obtains among the Wayao, in order that the widow may be clean for her prospective husband. The paid man is called Simo, which is the Yao word for hyena (Rowman, *Harvard African Studies* III, Art. vii., p. 305).

The word Simo may also convey a sense of impersonality. It is said to denote the body of an unborn child, or of a child who dies before its father and mother have assumed sexual relations. (*Harvard African Studies* III, Art. vii., p. 305)

10. *Prohibited and Regulated Unions (Ngoni).*

The Angoni are patrilineal, and in the case of a mixed Ngoni-Chewa marriage the child always takes the clan (*mbumba*, Section IV) of the father, whether bride-price has been paid or not. The children of brother and sister may marry each other, but not the children of two brothers or half-brothers, nor the children of two sisters or half-sisters. As with the Achewa, so also with the Angoni it is no longer considered incestuous to marry someone of the same clan. 611 582 614

11. *Forms of Marriage (Ngoni).*

When an Ngoni wishes to marry, he sends a male friend without a gift to inform the girl's father of his desire. The father calls his wife, male relations and headmen to discuss the matter; and, if they agree to the proposal, the friend returns with the news to the prospective bridegroom who, several days later, despatches his embassy with a present to the embassy of the girl. There are always two embassies on each side, neither more nor less. A father is ineligible; and brothers, sister's sons and fellow-villagers are generally chosen, as they are more likely to be at hand if required at any time. The present is only symbolic, and generally takes the form of a goat, though in the case of a wealthy bridegroom it may be a cow or something equally substantial. This part of the procedure is known as *kwenga*, and as soon as the present has been received by the bride's father, the marriage is valid in law. 584 [583]

A few days later, the groom sends a friend to conduct the girl to his house. She comes with several elder women and other girl friends, but her mother may not join the party. The bridegroom provides for them a feast of beer and meat in commemoration with his wealth. He presents beads to his wife, this ceremony being known as *kwenkwa*, and sends a cloth (known as *mukoba*) to her mother, after which the women return home on the same day without consummation having been effected. [574] [431]

About a week later, accompanied by a small boy, the man proceeds by night to his father-in-law's house, and is given an empty house, where he sleeps with his wife. He must avoid being seen by any of the villagers, and therefore departs before daylight, going to a neighbouring village for food and rest, and returning on the following night, when the same precautions must be observed. [833]

On the second morning he goes back to his village, and after two or three weeks sends a friend to fetch his wife. This time she comes openly, and sleeps with him for two or three nights in any available hut, after which she returns to her father. [833]

The husband then begins to build her house at his village, and to pay the bride-price. This process is known as *kukwanda*, or *kupereka mukoba*. The *mukoba*, or bride-price, may consist of cows, or cash, or other goods; and it varies in value according to the standing of the parties. If the bride is fully grown, payment should be completed within four or five months. Nowadays, however, Ngoni girls are generally married shortly before they reach the age of puberty, and in such cases a year or two may be allowed; but when the husband is unnecessarily dilatory, his father-in-law may oblige him to build a house near his own and to live there until he has fulfilled his contract; and until the bride-price has been paid in full, he cannot expect his wife to reside with him permanently at his own village. 583 591 [582]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Marawi FR4

occasion on which he made known any new laws before the assembled leaders of his country. The ceremony was marked by special songs and dances performed only at that time. It was an occasion on which economics, religion, politics, social life and recreation were brought together in a dramatic form in the part played by the Paramount Chief *vis-à-vis* his people. When speaking of these 'good old days' the Ngoni always refer to the *Inqwala*, for it was to them symbolic of the greatness of their *Inkosi*, and of how 'they lived well' before the *Azungu* came as despoilers.

On the subject of warfare and of training for war the Ngoni will talk for hours. Among the many things which they mourn in the passing of the old order, they regret most the military training of youths and men, and the age-grade system which was part of it. They point out how a youth had his appointed companions to whom he stood in a recognized relationship of mutual obligation and assistance, and with these companions he went through the grades of calf-herding and cattle-herding until he graduated into a regiment. The field worker can observe how much Ngoni 'national feeling' was bound up with memories of war days, when to-day they put on their war dress and dance war dances at a chief's village. I have seen Chewa men and women huddle together during these war dances, and mutter, 'Too many Ngoni are here', as if they were still in the days of fighting and raids, while the Ngoni warriors swagger about, swishing their kilts of skins and brandishing their shields and spears with every appearance of reality. I have heard accounts of Ngoni raids for cattle going as far as the Kafue River, into the Mashukulumbwe country, given with such details of the places on the march that I think they must be substantially correct. Even if it is legendary, the recital of such raids still fosters Ngoni pride and distinction, and I have heard an old man who took part in such a raid compare it scornfully with young men going nowadays to Broken Hill and the Copper Belt. 'They go only for money', he said, 'We went for our *izidlodlo*[1] and for cattle to honour the *inkosi*'.

The Ngoni are realists and they admit that while they planted their institutions in the country and maintained most of them, at the same time a measure of adjustment was going on to the local cultures. For

[1] Head-ring, the sign of a warrior ready to marry.

9: Read E-S (1935) 1936 FRS Ngoni FRS
Maravi FRY

this they put the blame on the women. They point out that while they were on the march the local women they picked up, with their different language and customs, had not a great deal of influence on the community. Once they were settled, however, and married local women, those women went visiting to their own homes and took their children with them, and gradually a pronounced alien element and another language penetrated into Ngoni society. This is illustrated very well in the girls' initiation ceremonies, which differ very much in Ngoni and Chewa society. Ngoni men and women tell you with disgust how the *chisawasi*, the Chewa ceremony, began to be practised in Ngoni villages in place of the *umtiindo* or *umgwayo* of the Ngoni. It was the only occasion on which I have heard them commend the action of the missionaries in putting down a custom, for they really despised the ceremonial and associations of the *chisawasi*, and rather than have it among them, they preferred outside help in putting it down.

The Ngoni dislike very much being asked point blank what cultural adjustments they made due to Chewa and other local customs. They admit reluctantly one or two minor adaptations, and proceed immediately to tell the major changes which they forced on the Chewa and others living under their rule. The chief adjustment by the Ngoni has undoubtedly been the adoption of the local language, as being the language of the women. Ngoni women of good family still speak Ngoni, but I have not found any instances of local women married to Ngoni men who have learned it. One of the perennial topics among the elders in an Ngoni village is the 'bad' influence of the women on the children. When pressed to explain the nature of this 'bad' influence, they say, 'The children are learning only the customs of the women. They cannot know about the Ngoni'. They lament the vanishing of the age-grades as the natural channels for instruction of young men in Ngoni customs, though they say with their characteristic realism, 'What is the good of having age grades and regiments when there is no war?'

If we were to attempt to reconstruct old Ngoni society as it was in the days before white contact, it is to this period, *chantondezi*, we should turn. There we can find the structure of Ngoni society, the distinctive Ngoni institutions, and Ngoni supremacy over the surrounding tribes as a reality. When the first white people arrived, as

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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Mpezeni

621 622 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest son of the chief who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the 551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

624 To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

621 582 178 In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives, and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 166 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so. During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Forde, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 150: '... the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

● 582 835 601 proposed marriage appears to conflict with these rules of incest, because of some distant relationship between the couple, the connection may be conveniently forgotten by the parties concerned. Incestuous liaisons between people whose parents are still alive are hampered from becoming proper marriages by the refusal of the woman's parents to accept any marriage payments from the man. Similar liaisons between older people may alter the relative kinship status of other couples so that their marriages become incestuous, and they will appeal to the courts. For example, an old man married his son's wife's mother, whom he called *child's parent-in-law*. In consequence, his son and his son's wife became *sibling* to each other. The young woman refused to go on sleeping with her husband, who appealed to the court. The old man was then ordered to give up his newly acquired wife, so that his son's marriage might continue.

[601] 551 614 582 At its widest extension, the term *sibling* is applied to any person of the same descent-name as ego and of approximately the same age. The other kinship terms are then applied to the relatives of this nominal sibling in the usual way. However, there is no rule of exogamy applying to these nominal relatives. These descent-names have been referred to by other writers on the Ngoni as clan-names and the aggregate of people with the same descent-name as a clan. The Ngoni term for such names, *zi-dzogo*, is related to the Zulu *izi-duga*, and many of the Ngoni descent-names are the same as the names of the clans described for the South-Eastern and Central Bantu.[1] However, among the Fort Jameson Ngoni at the present time, the category of persons formed by all those holding the same descent-name does not have any of the attributes generally attributed by modern writers to the clan. There are no clan heads, no clan exogamy, no clan taboos, no beliefs in a common origin from a legendary ancestor, no clan totems, and no correlation between clan and territory. In these conditions it seems better to use the term descent-name, as has been done for the Lozi.[2] Informants state that even in the old days, when there was a closer approximation to a clan system, there was no clan exogamy. These names are normally inherited by the child from its father, and some of the names are not very common in the tribe, so that it happens that all the people bearing the one name may be the patrilineal descendants of one man. Such groups are exogamic, but this is

[1] Cf. Young, *History of the Tumbuka-Kamanga*, p. 143, for a classification of some of these names, on the basis of ethnic origin.

[2] Gluckman, *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, pp. 84-5.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

said to be due to their definite knowledge of common patrilineal descent rather than due to the common name. At the other extreme are names such as *simbo*, *banga*, and *phiri*, which are derived from the neighbouring tribes of the region and are very common and have no connection of exogamy.

Prior to the arrival of the Ngoni descent-names were inherited in the matrilineal line by the Cewa, Nsenga, and other tribes of the Eastern Province. Under Ngoni influences, the rule was reversed and the great majority even of recently incorporated Ngoni now bear the same names as their fathers. Some people do take the descent-names of their mother, as, for example, a child born in adultery who is not accepted by its mother's husband, or one whose father dies young so that it is brought up by a relative of its mother. As with the Tonga of Mazabuka, some descent-names have locally alternative forms, and in one instance men and women take different names.[1]

Appeal is sometimes made for protection and help on the basis of a common descent-name, but this is not a very strong tie and is invoked only when no closer link can be found. The principal uses of descent-names are in polite forms of address and in connexion with beer-drinking.

Marriage Payments

The initiative in choosing a spouse usually lies with the man. A woman who takes too much initiative in this matter is regarded, usually correctly, as likely to be unfaithful. In the old days marriages were more frequently arranged by the parents of the couple concerned, but now this happens only when the man is away. Men who are on the farms or in the mines send money home to brothers or fathers with instructions to find them suitable wives, and to *allot* the money as the legalization payment. During the 1939-45 War this arrangement was continued by soldiers who were away.

The most important payment in connexion with marriage is that made by the bridegroom to the bride's father which I shall call the legalization payment.[2] This payment is the one that establishes unequivocally the right of the husband to damages should his wife commit adultery or be allowed by the court to divorce him. It must be observed, however, that damages may still be awarded to the husband under certain conditions where no legalization payment has

[1] The same rule for a man however avoids for a woman in certain areas.
[2] *Cimalo*, no plural. Cf. Young, *Customs and Folk Lore*, p. 61.

13 Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FRS Ngoni FRS

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes that the Tongs or others went to when a single chief would have two wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the lower customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his father-in-law a dowery for his daughter. The value of the dowery varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats. This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and smoked, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it.

4: Steere D-S (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao
Morel: F24
Ngoni: F25

M 951 549 A boy having an eminence in the sight will take his soiled cloth to the headmen of the village. He says, if the stain be black, that the boy must not marry as he will be impotent. A man who has no erection when evacuating the bowels thinks himself ill, and will seek medicine.

M 941 195 [911] Menstruation usually commences from twelve to fourteen years, when the breasts develop and hair appears on the pubes. I am inclined to put it later than has commonly been stated.* The women dance, and instruction is given to the girl who has just arrived at puberty. The Yao no longer hold a dance. Menstruation is said to appear in those who grow fastest at a somewhat earlier age. It is said never to be delayed. Women state that they menstruate once every moon, the flow lasting from three to seven days; if for a longer time it is due to some sickness (menorrhagia is not uncommon). There is no purification after menstruation, but a wife sleeps apart from her husband, *i.e.*, on another bed, and she may not put salt into the food.

M 195 Boys, I should say, attain puberty at fourteen to fifteen years, when change in the voice takes place. The average age at marriage I should judge at seventeen and fifteen respectively in male and female. This of course only refers to first marriages, and when no blindness occur. [Among the Angoni a man was not allowed to marry until thirty years of age, a woman twenty.] The child-bearing period lasts about twenty years.

N ●[922] M 911 It is believed that the child is formed only from what the man introduces into the woman—the semen. The average number of children in a family is three to five; out of every five, only three survive to adult age. The number of boys born is greater than the number of girls. Pregnancy in a woman is said to be known by the head woman, by her becoming pale. After pregnancy is detected, husband and wife live together, and coitus continues to take place, for some time; with some only for the first six weeks.

M 953 M 944 Labour takes place either in the woman's own house or in that of her mother. She is assisted by a midwife, generally an old woman (not her mother). The patient sits on the floor of the hut or an old mat naked, half reclining on the midwife, who kneels down behind her and presses her abdomen with both hands. No internal examination is made, and no assistance is given in cases of difficulty.

M [995] The duration of labour is from one hour to five days, ending in death. Mortality from obstructed labour is high, in contradiction to the ease with which natives are usually said to give birth to children. The umbilical cord is not divided until after the birth of the placenta, and then close to its placental attachment; it is not tied. The whole length is bound to the abdomen of the child by some cotton, separating about the seventh day; medicine is then applied to the umbilical scar,

M [778] consisting of the charred root of a tree mixed with oil.

* It has been told me that menstruation used not to occur until the age of seventeen, but that of late years, on account of free sexual intercourse before puberty, it is earlier, and therefore the child-bearing age is earlier, sixteen instead of eighteen.